Joy to Youth

I was on automatic and kept repeating
I will go unto the Altar of God.
To God who giveth Joy to my Youth!

The old priest beside me uttered enough
Old Testament nonsense to justify his fee.

We stopped walking and I was blindfolded.
Turned gently round in the noisy pebbles.

I heard the single shot and the priest’s quick
unsuck of breath. And fall.

The Sergeant removed my blindfold, and we
drank vodka to *Life!*

“And finding the guilty one, Comrade!”